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March 19, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents and Charter School Directors

FR: Ashley Garcia, School Medicaid/ Health Services Coordinator *AG*

RE: **Individualized Healthcare Plans and the Individualized Education Program**

An Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP) is a document developed by the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) licensed school nurse. For those students requiring nursing services, the IHP will outline the type, amount, and degree of care needed by the student. Some examples of conditions that may warrant the need for development of an IHP include, but are not limited to, asthma, diabetes mellitus, allergies, and seizure disorders. The IHP should be developed as soon as possible to address the nursing plan of care for the student while in school. The school nurse is vital in facilitating this process.

The IHP will contain a detailed description of nursing services and how these services are to be delivered to the student per a physician's written orders. According to the New Mexico School Health Manual (2014), "the IHP also covers other aspects of care such as a student's knowledge about their condition, self-care abilities and any modifications needed to enhance learning and prevent emergencies." The New Mexico School Health Manual may be found at http://nmschoolhealthmanual.org/shm_05.pdf. The standard nursing care plan components are utilized to structure the IHP. These components are outlined below.

Components of the IHP

The necessary components of the IHP include the student health history, assessment, nursing diagnosis, goals of care (including student, parent and physician goals), nursing interventions, expected outcomes, and evaluation of outcomes. By including these specific components in every IHP, the school nurse ensures that the student will receive the correct nursing services and is also responding to the delivery of these services appropriately. A student's IHP must be

reviewed by the school nurse, parent(s), and when appropriate, the student. The parent(s) must review, approve and sign the IHP. It is also important that the IHP be shared, on a need to know basis, with pertinent school personnel. A helpful example of an IHP may be located in the New Mexico School Health Manual at http://nmschoolhealthmanual.org/shm_05.pdf.

The Student's IHP and the Individualized Education Program (IEP)

The IHP works in conjunction with the Individualized Education Program (IEP). The PED strongly recommends that, in addition to maintaining a copy of the student's current IHP in the nurse's office, a copy of the student's current IHP should also be attached to the student's current IEP. This will help ensure continuity of care as the student moves between schools and/or districts. The "Medical/Significant Health Information" section of the PED IEP template discusses recommended placement of the IHP. The IEP templates for Preschool, Elementary and Secondary education are available for use on the PED Special Education Bureau website at <http://ped.state.nm.us/SEB/index.html>, under the "Forms" tab.

It is important to acknowledge the student's need for an IHP in the "Medical/ Significant Health Information" section of the student's IEP. The PED template contains a box that may be checked to declare whether or not the student requires "an individualized health plan or school health services as a related service." The IHP should describe the necessary nursing services in detail; it will guide the day to day delivery of nursing services to the student while in school. The information listed in the "Medical/Significant Health Information" section of the student's IEP, however, should not contain detailed medication or procedure (i.e. medical order specific) information that may be subject to change. This section of the student's IEP should be utilized only to describe the student's medical condition and the overall reason for need of school health services. Thus, in retaining medical order specific information in the IHP, the need for unnecessary IEP amendments will be avoided.

School Nursing Services and School Health Services in the IEP

Nursing services and/or school health services may be a necessary part of a student's IEP. Services that are reasonably predictable in nature, such as daily medication administration or urinary catheterization, should be listed in the "Schedule of Services, Related Services" section of the student's IEP. In order to be documented in this section of the student's IEP, nursing services will require: (1) an estimated duration; and (2) a specific frequency. In some instances "it would be appropriate for the IEP to specify, based upon the IEP team's determination of the student's unique needs, that particular services are needed only under specific circumstances, such as the occurrence of a seizure or of a particular behavior" (64 F.R. 12479, March 12, 1999).

Services that may only be needed under specific circumstances, such as emergency nursing care, should be listed in the "Schedule of Services, Supplementary Aids and Services" section of the student's IEP. Emergency nursing services that may be required unexpectedly cannot be listed in a daily, weekly or monthly time allocation. When acknowledging emergency nursing services as a supplementary service, a description of why they may be necessary should be included in the student's IEP. For example, a statement such as "Student is diagnosed with type 1 diabetes and may require additional emergency nursing services should s/he experience severe hypo/hyperglycemia" would be acceptable.

Continuity and Consistency in the Delivery of School Nursing Services

To ensure continuity and consistency in the delivery of nursing services while the student is in school, the PED strongly recommends that school nurses be invited to attend all IEP meetings for students who have, or may have, medical and health need considerations addressed during the IEP meeting. The school nurse should consult with the student's IEP case manager if unsure whether to attend the IEP meeting. It is important to recognize that each individual involved in the student's IEP process plays a specific role in the well-being of the student, and roles should be adhered to by the appropriate parties attending the student's IEP meeting. For example, IHP's and nursing goals should not be determined by anyone other than the school nurse, and educational interventions and goals should be determined by those professionals whose background has prepared them to make the educational determinations. As is always the case in a student's IEP meeting, the parent(s) and the student should be involved in the discussions and decisions regarding the student's educational, nursing and health service needs.

More information related to Individualized Healthcare Plans may be found by viewing the internet links included in the memorandum. Questions may be directed to Ashley Garcia at ashley.garcia@state.nm.us.

cc: Hanna Skandera, Secretary of Education
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